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S E C R E T THE HAGUE 003228

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/08/2014

TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: THE NETHERLANDS: RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR SPECIAL
OPERATIONS FORCES FOR OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

REF: A. STATE 251327 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. STATE 251753 (NOTAL)

[1](#)C. THE HAGUE 3162 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR CLIFFORD M. SOBEL FOR REASONS 1
.4 (B AND D)

[1](#)1. (S) PolMilOff made ref A demarche to MFA Security Policy Bureau Operations Office Director Rob Gabrielse on November 26 and DATT also raised the issue with MOD ACOS Operations Air Commodore Pieter Cobelens. Ambassador Sobel discussed this request with Defense Minister Kamp on December 8. Kamp said he expected the Netherlands would offer special operations forces (SOF) for this mission. He thought the Cabinet would take a decision to do this within the next 30-60 days, with a view towards deploying Dutch SOF to south Afghanistan in April 2005. We understand the deployment will probably consist of 80-100 SOF personnel from the Dutch Army's Korps Commandotroepen (KCT) and 100-150 support personnel along with three Chinook helicopters. The Dutch plan to make these forces available for the full range of SOF missions. Kamp said that parliament, whose concurrence is usually sought for military deployments, did not need to be advised of an SOF deployment, though they would be discretely informed of the mission outside of normal channels (which are usually a public Cabinet letter). Kamp also noted there was agreement between MOD and MFA to go ahead with the deployment. He said the Dutch might follow their SOF deployment by establishing a second Dutch ISAF PRT in the same region in 2006, in addition to their current PRT in Pol-e-Khomri, Baghlan province. Kamp advised that he had raised the possibility of PRT cooperation with the Japanese during his recent visit there and had invited the Head of the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Forces to visit the Dutch PRT in Pol-e-Khomri. He described the Japanese as "cautiously interested."

[1](#)2. (S) Comment: Kamp's comments are the most positive signal that we have heard from the GONL on a possible Dutch SOF deployment for OEF for some time. Such a deployment has been under discussion for more than two years. During that period it has been the subject of disagreement between MOD and MFA, with each department alternatively expressing concern about the political risks of such a mission, including possible Guantanamo implications for any AlQaeda/Taliban members that Dutch SOF might detain. We understand these concerns have since been resolved. By linking this mission to a possible follow-on PRT, Kamp may be planning to package the deployment by presenting offensive operations (SOF) in combination with reconstruction efforts (PRTs) in a way that may be more palatable to the Dutch parliament. End comment.
RUSSEL